

PDP

CAREER MANAGEMENT AND PMMP 70's

The Opportunity is Now

There has rarely been a more apparent need for the systematic review of personnel problems and requirements by the career services than there is today. Improving staff management has been the persistent desire of both managers and the employee. The latter has longed for more explicit evidence of a career development mechanism which he can relate to personally. The average employee is disposed to view personnel decisions as a matter of happenstance or the consequence of a "Panel" action whose deliberations remain imponderable.

Personnel Succession Problems

For some time the Agency has emphasized youth and has hoped to develop a youthful image. Early retirements have been encouraged; incentives have been sought to promote retirement decisions; efforts have been made to seek and understand the attitude of youth. The need for a serious appraisal of personnel successions in the various career services has been nearly ignored. It is evident, however, that in the next several years more and more employees will be obliged to retire at about the same time as their supervisors. This represents the bitter fruit of the well-known "age hump" in the Agency.

Management must appreciate that without significant lateral entry input to the Agency, most replacements for departing senior officials must come from the comparatively youthful employee now on board. A reasonable upward flow of well-qualified careerists must be maintained.

Personnel Utilization an Agency Concern

Agency career services and personnel managers have traditionally concentrated on determining assignments and giving promotions to employees. Little has been done to develop those already on the roles through programs directly responsive to employee interests and capabilities. The Director's concern with more effective utilization of manpower emphasizes the need for the systematic assembly and analysis of information showing the nature and significance of personnel problems throughout the Agency. (Useful information can be provided Agency managers only through the application by each career service of the same approach in gathering and reporting personnel data.) No longer should career services exaggerate their distinctiveness to the detriment of the interests of the Agency as a whole. Compartmentation must not serve to promulgate separatism. Agency assets must be continually shifted to meet changing programs or priorities. Agency managers should acknowledge that personnel issues transcendent parochial concerns.

PMMP 70's and Its Dividends

PMMP means that each career service reviews its personnel requirements, analyzes its employees' qualifications and plans personal development for its employees. It becomes clear that when each career service succeeds in this exercise, new policies and programs will follow. In this regard, the Office of Personnel, in coordination with career management officers, must devise ways of making Agency personnel policies, opportunities, benefits, and commitments more uniformly applicable to all Agency personnel.

Promotion controls should be geared to prevent the overdevelopment of employees and the oversaturation of Agency requirements in various occupational categories. Uniform time-in-grade policies for each grade level should be considered.

Career services should be explicitly responsible for keeping annual inputs of different skill categories compatible with future opportunities for their utilization. Related skill groups should be associated in possible combinations of interchangeability without regard to career service lines. Key qualifications and skills in these groups should be identified at different grade levels so that the extra training or experience an employee needs for movement from his career field to a related one can be established. This information would be of considerable value to continued effectiveness of the PMMP project.

PMMP Modified and Simplified

The original PMMP scheme was rather ambitious and somewhat unrealistic in that it involved a ten-year planning period. It has become quite evident that detailed personnel projections and decisions become somewhat fanciful when too far-reaching. The content of the Advanced Staffing Plans and the data prepared by the career services in connection with the average grade exercise should coincide with the data required of PMMP. The matter of estimating probable levels of separations, promotions and accessions would be simplified. This kind of systematic planning would be a major step forward and would provide a method for improving the linkage between program changes and personnel support.